

Message Text

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PASS AGRICULTURE ELECTRONICALLY

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TAGS:EAGR,EEC
SUBJECT: EC COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS'MEETING MAY 16-17

1.SUMMARY: IN ADDITION TO CONSIDERATION OF FISHERY MATTERS
(SEE SEPTEL),THE AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS,DURING THEIR 2-DAYJ
COUNCIL MEETING,ALSO DISCUSSED PROPOSALS TO CHANGE MCA
SYSTEM,TO PREVENT ABUSES OF SALES OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS
ON BOATS,AND TO DEFINE PURE-BRED BREEDING CATTLE,BUDGET
COMMISSIONER TUGENDHAT WAS INVITED TO THE COUNCIL TO CLARIFY
HIS PUBLIC REMARKS EGARDING EC DECISION-MAKING IN THE FARM
SECTOR.END SUMMARY.

2.AGRI-MONETARY.MINISTERS DISCUSSED A COMMISSION PROPOSAL
TO AMEND THE MONETARY COMPENSATORY AMOUNT (MCA)SYSTEM BY:
(A)PROVIDING THE PREFIXING OF MCA'S ON THIRD COUNTRY TRADE,
AND (B)AUTHORIZING THE COMMISSION VIA THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
PROCEDURE TO REDUCE MCA'S ON CERTAIN AGRICULTURALPRODUCTS.
THE MINISTERS WILL COME BACK TO THE MCA ISSUE AT THEIR NEXT
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COUNCIL SESSION JUNE 20-21 AT WHICH TIME THE COMMISSION IS TO
CLARIFY UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES IT WOULD CONSIDER REDUCING
MCA'S.T IS EXPECTED THAT THE COMMISSION WOULD NOT REDUCE
MCA'S FOR THE BASIC PRODUCTS FOR WHICH INTERVENTION IS UNDERTAKEN

BTU WOULD REDUCE MCA'S FOR PROCESSED PRODUCTS.

3.THE LATTER IS PARTICULARLY OF INTEREST TO THE UK BECAUSE OF ITS CURRENT DIFFICULTIES IN THE PIGMEAT SECTOR.IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY EC CHANGE IN THE CALCULATION OF THE MCA ONPIGMEAT,THE UK IS MAINTAINING ITS NATIONAL SUSBIDY.THE COMMISSIO HAS TAKEN THE UK TO THE EUROPEAN COURT OF JUSTICE CLAIMING THAT THE SUBSIDY IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE TREATY OF ROME. LAST WEEK THE COMMISSION ASKED THE COURT TO ACCELERATE THE JUDICIAL PROCEDURE AND THE COURT WILL HAVE A HEARING ON THIS MOTION MAY 20.

4.COMMISSIONER TUGENDHAT.BUDGET COMMISSIONER TUGENDHAT WAS CALLED INTO THE AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL MEETNG TO BE CHASTENED FOR HIS CRITICAL REMARKS ABOUT EC AGRICULTURAL DECISION-MAKING.

AT ISSUE WAS A MAY 2 SPEECH HE DELIVERED IN WHICH HE STATED INTER ALIA: " THE MINISTERS HAVE ADOPTED A FRANKLY IRRESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE TOWARDS COST.DEBATE TAKES PLACE ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY BETWEEN AGRICULTURA MINISTERS WHO CAN UNDERSTANDABLY CONCEIVE THEIR PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPORT THEIR DIFFERENT NATIONAL FARM LOBBIES." THE DISCUSSION SEEMED TO CENTER ON TWO ISSUES,THE FIRST OF WHICH WAS THE CONNOTATION OF THE TERM "FARM LOBBIES." MINISTERS ERTL AND MARCORA LASHED OUT THAT THEY DIDJ NOT REPRESENT FARMERS'LOBBIES BUT THEIR RESPECTIVE NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS.THE OTHER ISSUE THAT CONCERNED SOME MINISTERS WAS THAT OF COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY,IN PARTICULAR,THE APPROPRIATENESS FOR A COMMISSIONER TO CRITICIZE IN PUBLIC THE RECENT FARM PRICE DECISION WHICH REPRESENTED A COMPROMISE AGREED TO BY THE COUNCIL AND THE COMSSION.ALL DELEGATONS EXCEPT THE DANES AND THE UK JOINED IN THE ATTACK ONTUGENDHAT. UNCLASSIFIED

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THE GERMAN,IRISH AND ITALIAN INISTERS WERE PARTICULARLY UPSET ABOUT TUGENHAT'S REMARKS AND DEMANDED HE RETRACT THEM.THE TEMPERATURE GOT SO HOT IN THE COUNCIL SESSION THAT MINISTER LAVENS LATER COMMENTED, " IF I HAD BEEN TUGENDHAT,I WOULD HAVE RUN AWAY."

5.TUGENDHAT LATER TOLD THE PRESS THAT IN THE COUNCIL HE STUCK TO WHAT HE HAD SAID IN THE SPEECH BUT REGRETTEED THAT HIS WORDS MIGHT BE CONSTRUED (ESPECIALLY IN TRANSLATION INTO OTHER LANGUAGES)AS IMPUGNING THE HONOR OF THE COUNCIL OR INDIVIDUAL MINISTERS,WHICH WAS NOT HIS DESIRE.HE FURTHER STATED THAT NO COMMISSIONER HAD EVER TOLD HIM THAT HE DISSENTED FROM TUGENDHAT' VIEWS.UK SOURCES REALLY FIND NO FAULT IN THE COMMISSIONER'S ERMARKS BUT HOPE THE INSTANCE DOES NOT INCITE

5.BEEF.THE COMMISSIONERS APPROVED A REGULATION ON PURE-BRED BREEDING ANIMALS OF THE BOVINE SPECIES.SEPARATE AIRGRAM WILL FOLLOW ONCE IT IS PUBLISHED IN THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL.

6.SHIP VICTUALS.THE MINISTERS DISCUSSED COMMISSION PROPOSAL

TO PREVENT ABUSES ON BOARD SHIPS IN THE SALE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS. THE MATTER CONCENRS PRIMARILY THE COMMERCIAL PRACTICE OF GERMAN PLEASURE BOATS OF SELLING BUTTER AT BARGAIN PRICES TO TOURISTS.DISCUSSIONS WILL CONTINUE BILATERALLY BETWEEN THE SRG AND COMMISSION ON THIS.

7.ATMOSPHERICS.THE AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL WAS LONG ON ATMOSPHERICS AND SHORT N SUBSTANCE.DURING THIS 2-DAY SESSION IT BECAME QUITE LCEAR THAT WHAT WAS HAPPEHING OUTSIDE THE COUNCIL WAS MORE INTERESTING AND DRAMATIC THAN WHAT WAS GOING ON INSIDE THE MEETING.ON THE FIRST DAY THERE WAS A DELEGATION OF AROUND 100 SCOTTISH FISHERMEN(AND TO PROTESTANT MINISTERS)LED BY A BAG PIPER IN KILT.THEY CAME TO DEMAND EXCLUSIVE FISHING RIGHTS WITHIN 50 MILES OF THEIR WATERS.

AFTER THE SCOTTISH FISHERMEN LEFT,A DELEGATION OF UK PIG PRODUCERS ARRIVED TO POINT ATTENTION TTO THE HEAVY LOSSES THEY ARE INCURRING AS A RESULT OF THE MCA SYSTEM EVEN WITH THE UK NATIONAL SUBSIDY.
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THE NEXT DAY,A DELEGATION OF FRENCH WINEGROWERS FROM SOUTHERN FRANCE ARRIVED TO COMPLAIN ABOUT CHEAP ITALIAN WINE.
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